

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 2 and 9 are amended for the sake of clarity only. This, the claims are not narrowed by such amendments. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative at the personal interview conducted October 29, 2004. The substance of the interview is incorporated in the following remarks, which constitute Applicant's record of the interview.

The Office Action objects to the specification because of missing application serial numbers on page 1, lines 8-20. However, the Preliminary Amendment filed February 26, 2001, amended page 1, lines 8-20, to include the application serial numbers. In a telephone interview conducted September 22 and at the personal interview, the Examiner confirmed that the Preliminary Amendment had been received, and that the objection to the specification was obsolete. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

The Office Action objects to Figs. 1-12 because they are not designated by a legend such as --PRIOR ART--. Applicant herewith submits Replacement Sheets wherein Figs. 1-12 are designated by the legend, --RELATED ART--, in accordance with the specification. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection of Figs. 1-12 be withdrawn.

The Office Action objects to Figs. 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 36, 43, 44, 47, 49, 51, 54, 56, 59, 65, 69, 70 and 71 for including reference characters not mentioned in the description. At the personal interview, Applicant's representative explained that the reference numbers are mentioned in the Brief Description of the Drawings, and for Fig. 19, each of the elements 1118, 1120, 1122, 1124, 1126, 1128 and 1130 are mentioned in the specification on pages 19-25. Accordingly, as agreed to during the personal interview, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheets make changes to Figs. 1-12. The attached sheets replace the original sheets with Figs. 1-12.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

The Office Action objects to claims 2-4 and 9-11 for informalities. By this Amendment, claims 2 and 9 are amended, thereby obviating this objection. As agreed to during the personal interview, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to claims 2-4 and 9-11 be withdrawn.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Office Action indication that claims 2-4 and 9-11 recite allowable subject matter. However, Applicant respectfully submits that, as discussed below, all claims are allowable.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 5-8 and 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,032, 111 to Mohri, in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,610,812 to Schabes et al. (hereinafter "Schabes"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that Mohri discloses replacing each occurrence of the unknown symbol in the input FST with an unknown symbol in a diacritic to define a left-sequential FST, and cites column 11, lines 1-5. However, this portion of Mohri discloses only that "Fig. 5F represents the finite-state transducer that identifies occurrences of the left context string λ . In addition, as λ is only identified after the $<_1$ and $<_2$ are added, the alphabet rule Σ^* for the rewrite rule 'a-->b/c_b' is 'a, b, c, d, $<_1$, $<_2$ '." Therefore, λ is not an unknown symbol. On the contrary, λ is a left context string. The fact that the left context string is represented by the variable λ does not indicate that the context string is unknown, only that it is not specified. In fact, column 1, lines 25-30, of Mohri define λ as "the regular expression which appear (sic) to the left of ϕ ," where ϕ is the regular expression to be replaced. Moreover, the variable λ represents a string, not a symbol.

As agreed to during the personal interview, Mohri is not directed to a method for factoring an input finite-state transducer including an unknown symbol at all. Mohri is directed to generating finite-state transducers from context-dependent rewrite rules which introduce context marking symbols ($<_1$ and $<_2$) only when and where they are needed. (See Abstract.)

Accordingly, Mohri does not disclose each and every feature recited in independent claims 1 and 8. Schabes does not remedy the deficiencies of Mohri with respect to claims 1 and 8, as Schabes also does not disclose or suggest "replacing each occurrence of the unknown symbol in the input FST with the unknown symbol and a diacritic to define a left-sequential finite-state transducer," as recited in claims 1 and 8. Claims 5-7 depend from claim 1, and claims 12-14 depend from claim 8. Therefore, claims 5-7 and 12-14 are patentable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claims 1 and 8, as well as for the additional features they recite. Accordingly, as agreed to during the personal interview, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1, 5-8 and 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-14 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:JKS/jth

Attachment:
Replacement Sheets (Figs. 1-12)

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